

**Remarks by United States Ambassador,  
Hans H. Hertell  
Anti-Corruption Conference  
June 4, 2002**

I am honored to be invited to talk to this distinguished gathering of public and civil society leaders. The cooperation and collaboration between the public and private sectors and civil society on fighting corruption has made me more optimistic than ever about the future of the Dominican Republic.

Many of you gathered here today have devoted your lives to the fight for poverty alleviation, civil rights and justice, with equity and impartiality, for all. And that fight has inevitably led you into battles against corruption in its many dimensions and manifestations. We applaud your efforts and your past and ongoing initiatives to prevent this evil that countermands the efforts of honest citizens in so many spheres.

I'd like to focus my remarks on three areas: the disproportionate impact of corruption on the poor, the negative impact of corruption on citizen confidence in democracy and democratic institutions and finally the development assistance the United States would like to share with our friends who are seriously combating corruption.

Many of the consequences of corruption are well known and documented, they include: underdevelopment; ...unfavorable climate for national and international investments; ...lack of resources for basic services; ...lack of confidence in the governmental system, and ...the threat to democracy and governability!

Corruption strips the corruptors of their honor and dignity, but what makes corruption an even more evil phenomenon is that it disproportionately impacts on the poor who don't need *estudios y diagnosticos de expertos* to understand the negative effects of corruption. They live and suffer the consequences of corruption every day of their lives! But corruption not only diminishes their quality of life today, it also robs the poor of a better tomorrow.

This lack of hope has produced much citizen frustration with newly democratic governments. We need to realize that this frustration is not caused by the failure of democracy as a system of governance; but rather, because by not seriously combating corruption, governments haven't given the promise of democracy a fair chance! And that promise is equal opportunity for a better life, conservation of individual and collective political and civil liberties, and economic growth, which increases employment and reduces poverty. The type of democracy which citizens want is one, which improves the quality of life for not just a privileged few, but for all citizens.

On March 22nd of this year, in Monterrey, Mexico President George W. Bush renewed our commitment to fight poverty around the world calling for a new compact for development defined by accountability. Because corruption can greatly hinder any anti-

poverty fight, he clearly explained that future assistance would only go to governments that offered their citizens good governance

President Bush has challenged all of us -- U.S. Embassies and USAID Missions around the world – and all our local counterparts to be accountable for results. **Quote** "For decades, the success of development aid was measured only in the resources spent, not the results achieved. Yet, pouring money into a failed status quo does little to help the poor, and can actually delay the progress of reform. We must accept a higher, more difficult, more promising call. Developed nations have a duty not only to share our wealth, but also to encourage sources that produce wealth: economic freedom, political liberty, the rule of law and human rights." **end quote**

Here in the Dominican Republic, the U.S. government has been working with Dominican partners (both public sector and civil society) to identify democracy/governance challenges and to design development assistance programs to meet those challenges. I am pleased to announce that these objectives are included in a new proposal for a \$30 million dollar, five-year, U.S. government donation to the Government of the Dominican Republic, under programs to be carried out in 2003-2007 to strengthen democracy and good governance. A significant focus of this new proposal is directed to transparency and anti-corruption programs and we expect some \$5.8 million dollars will be made available, donated, to assist Dominicans, the State and civil society, in their efforts in that area.

Your individual and collective commitments to lead new transparency and anti-corruption programs and your insistence on reform will support what President Bush calls "the work of compassion", compassion for the plights of the poor and all those who suffer most the effects of corruption. To assure better lives for the poor and for all citizens, I know we all agree that it is a truly a sacred duty for all citizen and all public servants to unite their efforts to the building of a democracy and organizational cultures and practices which resist and don't accept corruption!

It is a difficult business you have taken on here today, but not an impossible one as many countries are happily discovering. When fighting the good cause, and with God and every person of good will on your side, who can prevail against you?

I wish you the best in your efforts, and please be assured of our continued support.

Thank you.